

The CONNECTOR

A weekly publication of Harris County Department of Education
for the HCDE Board of Trustees



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Week of June 6, 2016

From the office of JAMES COLBERT, JR. – SUPERINTENDENT

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OF NOTE

First off, I want to thank each of you who were able to attend this week's Special Board Meeting. I realize that you have several Board commitments this month. Between Tuesday's Special Board Meeting, two Budget Workshops, along with the regularly scheduled June Board Meeting, this is a very busy month for you. As always, thanks for your service to HCDE.

It's now official—the academic year is officially over. As mentioned in last week's issue of **The Connector**, the Department is now on the Summer Flex Schedule. This schedule will be in effect through August 5, 2016. During this time, our business hours are 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and the main building is closed on Friday. The North Post Oak location is open on Fridays throughout the Summer Flex period for those divisions and staff working alternate schedules. This is a commonly-employed method in school districts and numerous other public entities to conserve resources.

On Monday of this week, I met with the superintendent of La Porte ISD. Meeting with the Harris County superintendents is a priority for me as I continue to cultivate and leverage HCDE's relationships with area leaders. I will continue these meetings throughout the summer months while our superintendents are regrouping for the next academic year.

Yesterday, I continued my work and professional development toward fulfilling my duties with the American Leadership Forum. The all-day work session was productive and valuable. As mentioned in previous issues of **The Connector**, I am part of the organization's current class. This opportunity provides a great deal of positive exposure for both the Department and me. Likewise, I maximize the experience to bring as much visibility to HCDE as I possibly can. My class is composed of a unique cross-section of professionals across the greater Houston and Harris County areas.

In the area of teaching and learning, we continued our efforts to help students achieve by training the trainers. We hosted Part III of an online instructor's training module this past Monday. On Tuesday, we focused on Classroom Management and Social Studies, and Literacy Field Experience with a focus on Houston's Holocaust Museum. We wrapped up the week by increasing expertise on writing with a training entitled, What Successful Writers and Readers Do. HCDE continues to provide value, opportunity, and service to client school districts.

On the calendar for next week, I will be meeting with yet another Harris County superintendent. I will also further the Department's efforts to help fortify the future of our Adult Education population by meeting with the Associated Builders and Contractors group. The purpose of this meeting is to increase the work that is already in progress—exposing our Adult Education students to non-traditional employment opportunities as they receive GED training. I will also be providing the welcome at an event for the Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators, a group of Human Resources professionals.

In closing, please be reminded of next week's Board Budget Workshop. It will be held Wednesday, June 15, 2016. The last Board Budget Workshop of this cycle will take place immediately before the June Board Meeting on Tuesday, June 21, 2016.

As always, I hope you enjoy this issue of **The Connector** and I hope you have a relaxing weekend.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS



Former Alief ISD Administrator Darlene Breaux Named Director of Special Populations at HCDE

Darlene Breaux is the new director of special populations for the Teaching and Learning Center at Harris County Department of Education.

Breaux, a resident of Alief, is a national trainer, former principal and special services coordinator who has 19 years of service in education. She holds a bachelor's degree from Texas Southern University and a master's in educational management with principal certification from the University of Houston Clear Lake, where she graduated with high honors.

As director, Breaux oversees continuing professional learning opportunities for teachers who educate students being served in special population programs. Her credentials include state teacher certifications in both English as a second language and special education.

She is a member of Kappa Delta Pi National Honor Society and is active in the Alief community as a board member for the Alief YMCA. Breaux comes to HCDE from Arrow Academy/McCormick Honors Academy where she served as director. In addition, she is the former special services coordinator in Alief Independent School District.

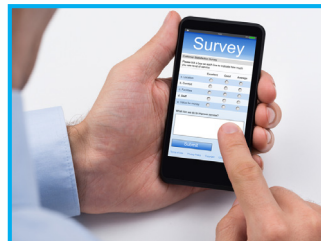
"As special populations director at HCDE, I am committed to offering relevant and research-based learning opportunities for teachers, administrators and district directors," she said.

Breaux is married and has three children.

Annual Client Satisfaction Survey Brings Record Response from HCDE Employees

Sixty-four percent of HCDE employees responded to the Annual Client Satisfaction Survey, an online survey that measures employee satisfaction with internal support services provided by HCDE internal divisions. Results will be released this summer.

The survey, which is managed by the Research and Evaluation Institute (REI), recorded feedback from 655 employees, the highest number of responses to date. The survey was a collaborative project led by REI, with assistance from Communication and Client Engagement and Technology.



Guided by HCDE's accountability process, the survey was endorsed by Superintendent Colbert, and supported by the Executive Leadership Team and division directors. HCDE leadership issued strong encouragement for staff to participate. Four drawings for free lunches at local restaurants were used as incentives.

Advancing Teaching and Learning by Training the Trainer

Trainings hosted at HCDE this week

JUNE 6, 2016

Online Instructor's Training - Part III

JUNE 7, 2016

Classroom Management

Social Studies and Literacy Field Experience: Focus on the Houston Holocaust Museum

JUNE 8, 2016

What Successful Writers & Readers Do

JUNE 9, 2016

Quarterly Operations Board Meeting

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

Head Start Hosts Job Fair, Interviews for Various Positions

Head Start hosted a job fair this week and interviewed approximately 25 candidates for various positions. Available positions include Head Start and Early Head Start teachers, teaching assistants, cooks, and assistant center managers. The Head Start/ Early Head Start program serves more than 1,200 students from infancy to 5 years of age in northeast Houston.



Workforce Solutions Visits Adult Education Classroom in Klein

Workforce Solutions staff visited Adult Education students enrolled in GED classes at Klein High School on May 23 to discuss workforce options with students. Workforce Solutions Willowbrook office manager Nicole Quintero shared information about career and certification programs available through her office. She invited students to schedule an appointment to plan their next career step after obtaining their GEDs.

Zatopek Helps Plan State Conference for Educator Certification Organization



Lidia Zatopek, director of Educator Certification and Professional Advancement and executive board member of the Consortium of State Organizations for Texas Teacher Education (CSOTTE), attended the annual board retreat held in Port Aransas and joined leadership to help plant the 2016 conference set for October 16-18 in San

Marcos. CSOTTE is a state nonprofit organization dedicated to the continual support and refinement of preparation and development programs for certified school personnel in Texas.

The Consortium functions as an umbrella organization of traditional and alternative certification institutions to promote quality programs in teacher education, develop preparation guidelines for the profession, and work with official policymaking groups and individuals to frame and promote professionally-sound legislation, rules, regulations, and structures for educator preparation in Texas.

Adult Education Participates in Career Conference

Twelve adult education teachers and administrators participated in the 2016 Career Pathways Conference in Galveston last month. Sessions concentrated on integrating education and job training opportunities along with distance learning experience. Manager Angela Johnson and Digital Learning aide Blanca Guerrero presented a session on documentation of distance learning contact hours.

In addition, the conference highlighted the Texas Higher education Coordinating Board Accelerate Texas project. Through the project, HCDE and Lee College are collaborating in developing new opportunities for integrating GED and vocational training the advanced manufacturer sector.

Opportunity

PROGRAM CONNECTIONS

HARRIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Parents are cordially invited to join the fight against hunger by volunteering at the **Houston Food Bank Afterschool Community Service Day!**

Monday, June 27, 2016 ▪ 9 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
535 Portwall Street ▪ Houston, Texas 77029

The entire family can volunteer. Kids must be 6 years or older. Transportation will be provided. Space is limited to 20 families per campus. Sign up today with your school's afterschool coordinator!



CASE for Kids Hosts Afterschool Community Service Day

Case for Kids is hosting an Afterschool Community Service Day to benefit the Houston Food Bank on Monday, June 27 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Parents and families from the 21st Century Cycle 8 sites are invited to volunteer and join the fight against hunger. For more information, visit <http://goo.gl/OtU75a>.

HARRIS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

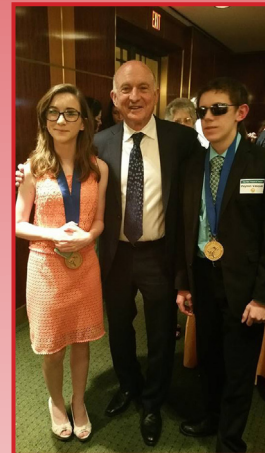


Service

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Nine Harris County Students Travel to New York City's Carnegie Hall to Accept National Scholastic Art & Writing Medals

Nine of the best student artists and writers from Harris County traveled to New York City's Carnegie Hall last week to be honored with Scholastic Art & Writing Gold Key Medals. In total, Harris County teens received 50 National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for 2016. The Awards are sponsored regionally by Harris County Department of Education.



During the National Ceremony on June 2, 660 teens from across the U.S. were honored by filmmaker Ken Burns, Emmy award-winning writer and actor Sonia Manzano, Emmy award-winner and bestselling author Tim Gunn, former U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins and surprise guest, award-winning actor Alec Baldwin.

"For more than 90 years, Scholastic Art & Writing Awards has recognized the vision, ingenuity and talent of our students and provided opportunities for creative teens to be celebrated," said Andrea Segraves, Harris County Department of Education coordinator for Scholastic Art & Writing. "With more than 320,000 entries nationally, we are proud of our Harris County medalists."

Along with the Gold Key recognitions, Deer Park Bonnette Junior High School student Peyton Vasquez was honored with the RBC "Flaunt It" Award, sponsored by RBC Capital Markets, and a \$1,000 scholarship. Vasquez was one of only two teens nationally to be recognized with this award.

The students who traveled to New York City were Andrea Conley, Houston ISD; Erin DelPaggio, Klein ISD; Judy Labib, Cypress Fairbanks ISD; Jasmine Mack, Katy ISD; Bradlee Few, Kincaid School; Taylor Gleason, Deer Park ISD; Autumn McMillian, Galena Park ISD; Melanie Menkiti, The Village School; and Peyton Vasquez, Deer Park ISD.

For more information, photos and videos from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, visit <https://goo.gl/EnGcZY>.



Systemic Achievement

...with purposeful intent

Management of Administrative, Fiscal, and Facilities Function

In accordance with the Board's expectations of me to:

- Oversee a budget development process that results in recommendations based on Department priorities and available resources;
- Oversee budget implementation in a way that ensures appropriate expenditure of budgeted funds, and provides for clear and timely budget reports; and
- Implement and oversee a planning process that results in goals, targets, or priorities for major areas of operations

For the past several months, the Department has been thoroughly engaged in preparations, hearings, analysis, and review in preparation to present the 2016-2017 budget, and to ensure seamless implementation of the same. Countless meetings have been held on various levels throughout the Department. I have been fully-engaged throughout the process and I have had numerous meetings with the Assistant Superintendent of Business, as well as with other members of the Executive Leadership Team, as well as other personnel at varying levels within the Department regarding this budget cycle.



The 2016-2017 budget will be presented for your approval at the June Board Meeting. As a result of having completed the process of budget development, I have made recommendations based on Department priorities and available resources. Per Board approval of the proposed budget, I will be in a position to oversee implementation in a way that ensures appropriate expenditure of budgeted funds and provide clear and timely reports. Having arrived at this critical point is the result of having executed and managed a planning process that resulted in goals, targets, and/or priorities for major operations.

By having successfully completed this process, I am meeting the Board's expectations of me as a conservative financial leader

- **To look for ways to improve programs and services without greater expenditures, and with concern for cutting expenses and costs to public schools for service without sacrifice to high quality services; and**
- **To recommend the annual budget to maximize resources and manage the budget while exercising prudent judgment.**

HCDE BOARD

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Position 3, At Large

Michael Wolfe
Position 5, At Large

UPCOMING BOARD EVENTS:

Board Budget Workshops
Wednesday, June 15, 2016
Tuesday, June 21, 2016
(Immediately before the June Board Meeting)

June Board Meeting
Tuesday, June 21, 2016
 1:00 p.m.
 ROOM 400

